

Appendix G

Response to Public Comments

From: Rick Foster [mailto:rafoster@acsalaska.net]
Sent: Wednesday, January 21, 2009 11:39 PM
To: Parker, Mario G SPK
Subject: Lake Forest Erosion Control Project

Re: Lake Forest Erosion Control Project; **3.1.6 Aesthetics.**

Mr. Parker:

I have a concern dealing with the aesthetic impact of the proposed berm/ walkway and the Drop Inlet on the south side of the meadow adjacent to Lupin Rd.

In 1977, I purchased two properties, my home, and the lot next door, on Lupin Lane (Rd.) which is adjacent to Reach 3W and Lake Forest Creek. I welcome the Lake Forest Erosion Control Project's objective to reclaim Lake Forest Creek, Polaris Creek and to restore the Lake Forest Glen Meadow.

Please address the height and appearance of the berm that will be located along Lupin Road.

A significant part of the value of my properties is its viewshed--specifically upon the meadowlands.

Certainly, a healthy and productive riparian and wetland system in proximity to my property would be aesthetically appealing. More important, is management and minimization of sediment and nutrient runoff to the Lake which would lead to less-primary productivity in Tahoe.

However, I request that the raised-berm walkway be at a height to be functional yet to not obstruct views of the meadow from lands on its southern boundary. The berm should be shaped to be natural-looking. The berm should be vegetated to be aesthetically pleasing, and be designed to allow easy foot and ski access to the meadow.

Similarly, since no description was offered of the proposed drop inlet, we expect the drop inlet to be visually non-obtrusive, designed to handle clumps of pine needles, branches, and snow/ice chunks, and be natural-looking.

Please assure us the aesthetics of our property's viewshed, the use recreational enjoyment of our neighborhood, and consequently, our property values, will not be adversely affected.

Thank you,

Rick Foster
Rick Foster, Ph.D.
Resource Ecology
2600 and 2560 Lupin Lane
PO Box 7882
Tahoe City, CA 96145

Appendix G

Public Review Comments and Responses

The January 2009 Draft EA for the Lake Forest Erosion Control Project, Area B, and its appendixes, prepared by the Corps, were distributed to the public on January 9, 2009. The public comment period closed on February 9, 2009. The submitted comments are included in this Appendix for the EA. Comments were received from:

- RICK FOSTER, Ph.D., RESOURCE ECOLOGY

The Corps received one public comment on the Draft EA. This document presents all comments submitted by Federal agencies and local interests regarding the Draft EA for the proposed Lake Forest Erosion Control Project, and also presents responses to those comments. The National Environmental Policy Act requires the Federal lead agency to respond to public comments received during the public review period. This document has been prepared in accordance with these requirements.

The responses below clarify information in the Draft EA as indicated in the responses to the comments.

RICK FOSTER, Ph.D., RESOURCE ECOLOGY, TAHOE CITY, CALIFORNIA
COMMENTS RE: Lake Forest Erosion Control Project, 3.1.6 Aesthetics

1) COMMENT: *I have a concern dealing with the aesthetic impact of the proposed berm/ walkway and the Drop Inlet on the south side of the meadow adjacent to Lupin Rd.*

In 1977, I purchased two properties, my home, and the lot next door, on Lupin Lane (Rd.) which is adjacent to Reach 3W and Lake Forest Creek. I welcome the Lake Forest Erosion Control Project's objective to reclaim Lake Forest Creek, Polaris Creek and to restore the Lake Forest Glen Meadow. Please address the height and appearance of the berm that will be located along Lupin Road.

Response: This response is noted in Section 3.1.6 of the Final EA. The berm adjacent to Lupin Lane would serve to redirect flood flows away from residential areas. For this purpose, the berm would be zero to four feet in height. While the berm may be visible from residential properties located at the end of Lupin Lane and Hillcrest Avenue and from the Lake Forest Glen Condominiums, the berm would not block views of the meadow from these adjacent residences. Once constructed, the berm would not be visible from SR 28 due to the planting of native riparian vegetation in the meadow, which would screen the berm from view. To improve the aesthetics of the berm, it would be revegetated with appropriate plant species approved by the TRPA.

The proposed Drop Inlet structures would be located within the roadway right-of-way (ROW). These structures would generally be installed below grade or would be low to the ground and would not have an aesthetic impact to the surrounding area.

2) COMMENT: *A significant part of the value of my properties is its viewshed--specifically upon the meadowlands. Certainly, a healthy and productive riparian and wetland system in proximity to my property would be aesthetically appealing. More important, is management and minimization of sediment and nutrient runoff to the Lake which would lead to less-primary productivity in Tahoe.*

However, I request that the raised-berm walkway be at a height to be functional yet to not obstruct views of the meadow from lands on its southern boundary. The berm should be shaped to be natural-looking. The berm should be vegetated to be aesthetically pleasing, and be designed to allow easy foot and ski access to the meadow.

Response: Height, aesthetics and revegetation of the berm are addressed in response to Comment 1 above. The berm will not be designed to allow easy foot and ski access to the meadow. Wet meadow, wetland, and riparian habitats also referred to as the Stream Environment Zone (SEZ) are delicate environments that are easily impacted by foot traffic, which contributes to overall vegetative loss and erosion of sediment into Lake Tahoe. A split-rail fence would parallel the northern border of the walkway to discourage human encroachment on the meadow. In order to provide passage to the other side of the meadow, a creek and wet meadow-spanning boardwalk would be constructed as a continuation of an existing earthen trail that exits the northwest corner of Lake Forest Glen communities. This would allow for viewing of the meadow and recreational access throughout the site while discouraging direct impact to the SEZ areas.

3) COMMENT: *Similarly, since no description was offered of the proposed drop inlet, we expect the drop inlet to be visually non-obtrusive, designed to handle clumps of pine needles, branches, and snow/ice chunks, and be natural-looking.*

Response: The sediment cans and drop inlets would also include sumps and weep-holes to maximize opportunities for infiltration prior to entering the storm drain/vault system. Visually, the sediment can/drop inlets are non-obtrusive and are located within the roadway ROW. These systems are designed to accommodate large amounts of woody debris, snow, and ice.

4) COMMENT: *Please assure us the aesthetics of our property's viewshed, the use recreational enjoyment of our neighborhood, and consequently, our property values, will not be adversely affected.*

Response: Effects to visual aesthetics related to project activities would be minimal, localized to the project area, and temporary. The Lake Forest Erosion Control Project aims to restore degraded stream channels, desiccated meadows, and areas with little to no vegetation. While some soil and vegetation disturbances would initially occur during construction, over time the effects would diminish as a healthy spectrum of native wetland and riparian vegetation propagates. As viewed from Lupin Lane, the overall Lake Forest watershed would appear more natural, especially regarding sinuosity of stream alignment and diversity of vegetative species.

New trails and boardwalks would be created to provide connectivity with adjacent recreational areas and existing trails, and to provide recreationalists with boardwalks to pass through sensitive restored areas. Properties adjacent to the restored areas would benefit from increased flood protection, increased access to local trails, and general beautification of their local viewshed.